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IRAN AND THE QUESTION OF NEUTRALITY  
Iran va-Mas'alah Betarafi, Tehran, 1954

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IRAN AND THE QUESTION OF NEUTRALITY

Iran va-Mas'alah Betarafi /Iran  
and the Question of Neutrality/,  
Tehran, 1954, 40 Pages

Dr. Filsufi,  
Doctor of  
International Law

Those who are neutral, those who are opponents  
of neutrality, those who are for the Western  
Bloc, those who are the hirelings of the Eastern  
Bloc, all should read this book.

SHOULD IRAN REMAIN NEUTRAL?

Yesterday

Should Iran remain neutral? They used to say that in the heat of the intense struggle -- on the stage of the violent conflict between the Communist Bloc on one side and the Western world on the other -- our country should remain absolutely neutral and impartial, have no contact with either of the two blocs, and consider both in the same light. Anything that is done for one should be done for the other so there would be no complaints or hurt feelings on either side. Any course or policy Iran adopts towards one should also be adopted towards the other with no deviation from neutrality.

This theme of the neutralists, which is also known as a policy of negative equilibrium, prevailed in Iranian political circles for sometime and still has many adherents among our governing bodies.

This policy has had great precedent and carried considerable weight from the time of the Constitutional Revolution to this day. During World War I and after World War II the Iranian Government adhered to it and in both instances suffered dire consequences which we shall discuss in their proper place.

After World War II Dr. Mossadegh was known as the champion of this theme and during his 27 months in power he followed it very closely and we have all seen and witnessed the conduct and consequences of it.

But Today

Under present conditions the question of neutrality is a much weightier problem than it was. We dare say it has to do with the survival of our country. In the world today we have two powerful blocs opposing each other and massing forces for a final showdown.

The irreconcilable struggle has been so intensified that the

smallest political problem, the slightest movement by other countries, finds immediate reaction on both sides.

Both blocs are preparing to face each other with maximum strength. They are consolidating their positions and trying to gain new footholds and trenches.

What is more striking is that the actual political fighting between the two blocs is not being carried out on the home bases but in regions between the two, i.e., in countries that have not clearly and decisively stated their position.

The bloody incidents and wars in Korea, Indo-China, Guatemala, etc., are proof that in the cold war the countries located between these two blocs, i.e., countries whose position has not been clarified, are more exposed to regrettable incidents and changes and the chances are much greater that they will become holocausts in the cold war.

Among such countries our country holds a predominant position. It is no secret that proximity to the Soviet Union, peculiar geographic location, which makes Iran Russia's only road to the open sea, strategic position for the defense of the Near and Middle East, and the existence of huge oil reserves make us one of the centers of intense struggle in the cold war. Our position and our policy are of great importance to each of the blocs.

In such a world and under such conditions the question of neutrality is naturally not an unimportant secondary problem. It is a most important subject and it has to do with the fate and survival of our country. Therefore, it is fitting that we study this matter with utmost care and deep concern and agree upon a policy that will be thoroughly realistic and in the best interests of our country.

#### Fanatical Partisans

Unfortunately many fanatical partisans have espoused neutrality for emotional and personal reasons and because of precedent. Their neutrality is mostly the product of a "Xenophonic" /Xenophobic/ feeling, i.e. hatred and aversion for other nations and races. When they say Iran should remain neutral it is not because they have calculated, pondered, and agreed that neutrality is best for our country but because they are fed up with the idea of collaborating with other nations, particularly the European and industrial nations. This "Xenophonic" feeling exists in most Eastern countries and the more backward a nation is the stronger and more powerful this feeling becomes.

The reasons for this feeling are many but the two following are the most important.

First of all, traces of isolationism, found among uncivilized primitive peoples, persist among backward nations. The tribesman

looks upon all other tribes, even the nearest, as untouchable, backward, and not worth dealing with. To savage tribes relationship with outside tribes of different blood means nothing and only the sword reigns. This primitive custom is rooted in the fact that the tribesman has not yet found the real meaning of humanity and does not understand the meaning of association and society. To the tribesman his is above all else and it must be worshiped. This is the reason why he is afraid to intermingle and associate with other tribes.

#### China Wall

This same feeling exists among the inhabitants of various cities and provinces. For instance, the Farsi belittle the Turks, the people of Teheran belittle the inhabitants of Isfahan, etc. When this feeling reaches national proportions it is much stronger. Backward nations try their utmost to keep their distance from European civilization. The people think they can, like the desert tribe, protect themselves from foreign influence by drawing a China wall around themselves with their ancient habits, fanaticism, and hatred. They do not know that the world of today is so closely knit that no China wall can offer resistance.

Another factor which excites the "Xenophonic" feeling is the colonial attitude of large industrial nations. Backward nations cannot differentiate between the basis of western civilization and colonial policy. They attribute the tyrannies of colonialism to western civilization and consequently their fury and hatred for the West become accentuated.

This "Xenophonic" feeling among nations in the East is like the reaction of the peasants and artisans when factories first made their appearance. Since they thought the soul-less machines were responsible for their misery and unemployment, the factories were invaded and the machines destroyed. They did not realize that the machines were instruments of happiness and not the cause of their plight.

Ill-feeling towards foreigners, the feeling of being fed up with other nations, the feeling for seclusion appeared under various forms in the East. One of the manifestations was the desire for absolute neutrality. Many fanatical partisans in our country feel that way too. If you ask them why Iran should remain neutral they shake their fists and shout: "Death to the Russians, British, and Americans". This answer is exactly the same as the "Xenophonic" feeling we described above. These people have chosen neutrality not for any intrinsic value but because they fear collaboration with any nation.

Their desire for neutrality is not based on knowledge, reasoning, and logic but on emotions, fanaticism, and precedent.

Of course, one cannot rely on such reaction. Only judgment based on reasoning and the reckoning of factors and elements involved

can be of value.

### Reasoned Neutrality

Another neutrality group realizes the truth of the above statement and tries to base its views upon reason and logic to show that neutrality is something necessary for Iran.

To have a clear picture of the problem of neutrality it is necessary to examine the views and reasoning of these neutralists very closely. We shall therefore present their arguments one by one, analyze them, and draw conclusion:

1. Neutralists say we live in a world with two powerful forces that are brutal oppressors of the weak. Neither has any regard for that which is right and just. Both simply talk to fool the smaller nations and exploit them; neither deep down inside believes what it says.

Everything that is said and the promises that are made are only for propaganda purposes to attract the smaller nations. But when they get what they want they do not give a darn for what they said. The Communists preach justice, equality, and the rights of weaker nations, but the nations which have become their slaves have no human rights at all. When propaganda resulted in the occupation of a country, the Russians used the whip, bayonet, prison, and gallows against the people. Westerners also pretend to be protectors but wherever their interests so require they trample freedom underfoot and use the weaker nations to pursue their own interests.

So, neither of these two blocs is a partisan of righteousness and justice. Consequently, if we, a weak nation that is searching for righteousness and justice, show an inclination towards either of the aggressive and expansionist blocs we shall deviate from the way of truth and be used as a tool in the fulfillment of brutalities. Therefore, our nation with its ancient customs, habits, and love for righteousness and justice cannot join the ranks of either bloc because we would not only be deviating from the straight and narrow but we would gain nothing by it; we may even be looked down upon. Therefore, the best policy for us is neutrality, or the refusal to join either side.

2. The second argument of neutralists is that neither of the blocs takes anyone's interests but its own into consideration. Though each says it is a protector of our interests, nothing but empty words are being uttered. What each has in mind is only its own interests. If they are nice to us today and extend a friendly hand it is only because they need us. It is because they want to get their donkeys across the bridge and as soon as they mount them again they forget what friendship and collaboration mean. Then they wipe out our rights with all their might and sacrifice our independence and freedom. We must not be fooled by them. Neither will safeguard and defend our interests in preference to its own. Therefore, we must safeguard our interests and our independence by not joining either of the blocs. We must adopt a policy of neutrality and do

all we can to remain neutral.

3. The third argument of neutralists is that there can be no doubt that the two gigantic world blocs are preparing for a terrifying and devastating war. If we should join one of the blocs, we would, without a doubt, draw upon ourselves the enmity of the other. For instance, if we should join the Soviet bloc, the western nations would look upon us with suspicion. Naturally they would try to destroy us. Eventually we would have to fight the Americans, the British, and the western nations and this would only result in our destruction. And if we were to join the Western Bloc by signing the Turko-Pakistan Pact we would incur the anger and enmity of the Russians. They would foment intrigues and at the outbreak of World War III they would occupy our country and inflict untold misery.

Even if the western nations should defeat Russia what benefit would we derive? We would become nothing but a British and American colony. They would occupy our country and confiscate our wealth and our belongings. What more could we expect?

Our interests require that we do everything possible not to become a battlefield in the next war. There is an old saying which says: "When there is a war between the cat and mouse the grocery store suffers."

Our interests demand that we do our best to maintain friendly relations with both sides, hurt neither one's feelings, draw anger and hatred from neither side, keep both in fear and hope, and by such policy maintain our equilibrium and preserve ourselves from danger. Therefore, the only thing for us is a policy of absolute neutrality.

4. The fourth argument of neutralists is that if we should join one of the belligerent blocs we would not only not derive any benefit but we would suffer innumerable privations. Actually, our freedom and independence would be limited or taken away from us entirely. Since we have not joined either of the blocs we are absolutely free today and we can take any step we deem necessary in domestic or foreign affairs. If we join one of the blocs we shall have to face restrictions imposed upon us by the treaties we sign. For instance, we would not be able to maintain extensive commercial, political, and cultural relations with the opposing bloc. We would not be able to sign separate treaties with countries in that bloc. Within the bloc we would be subject to the voice of the majority. We would not be free to maintain relations with other countries in the bloc and solve mutual problems solely in accordance with our own interests.

Moreover, domestic affairs, such as military forces, defense measures, and war plans would be subject to advice from the bloc. We would also have to concede bases to countries with whom treaties are signed. We would have to accept restrictions brought about by the entry of soldiers and military experts.

In brief, we would have to suffer all kinds of restrictions

and get nothing out of it.

The most important task for us in the world of chaos today is to safeguard our liberty and independence and let no restrictions be imposed upon us. And the only way to accomplish this is by remaining neutral.

5. The fifth argument is that history has shown neutrality to be beneficial to smaller nations. These partisans of neutrality give Switzerland as an example. They say, look at this small country situated at the crossroads of European politics between the three great powers of Germany, France, and Italy. By following neutrality Switzerland succeeded in protecting herself from the flames and ruins of two devastating wars whereas neighboring countries were either partitioned or suffered considerable damage. This small country with its wise neutrality not only did not suffer damage but derived immense benefits from the two wars. During the wars Switzerland maintained extensive commercial relations with countries on both sides. Had she joined the ranks of one of the belligerents, her territory would have been ravished, her industries and historical remains destroyed, and she would not have enjoyed the enormous commercial profits she did.

These benefits Switzerland and similar countries got by maintaining neutrality. Therefore, the best policy for our country is neutrality and we must continue to follow it.

6. The sixth argument for neutrality contends that not only the history of the world and the fate of smaller nations but also the history of our country, particularly during the last century, prove the advantages of neutrality. For instance, during World War I Iran remained neutral, whereas during World War II it joined the Allies and declared war on Germany and Japan. Now let us compare the results of these two wars and see which of these policies was more beneficial. Although Iran was attacked by British and Russian forces and was the scene of several bloody battles during World War I, nevertheless our economy was not dislocated. The value of Iranian money rose and foreign powers were obliged to buy our products with gold and silver. After the war our prestige was great among nations and because of that prestige we were able to tear up the black treaty of 1919 and throw the Russians and British out of the northern and southern parts of Iran.

But during the last war we were an ally and as such we were burdened by our allies. They came, ate, took, wasted, doled out to us, used our railroads, bridges, roads, and airports so much that nothing remained but ruins. All we had, and did not have, we gave them in good faith for the purpose of a common victory. What was the result? The value of our money disappeared, life became terribly expensive, poverty, depression, unemployment, and bankruptcy set in. Our villages and farms fell into ruin. Poor farmers rushed in droves to cities and became a burden on the community. Thousands of other miseries were ours. And our friends, the Allies, after victory was won over the "common enemy," created still more difficulties. One of the Allies refused to evacuate our territory and invented such



puppets as Gholam Yahya and Pischevary. He swallowed up our gold and will not return it. Instead, he finds excuses every day and sends us notes of protest. The other ally, when we demanded our oil rights, started a thousand kinds of sabotage, sent the battleship Mauritius, threatened us with parachutists, blockaded us, and carved out the Aden Tribunal. We are still bothered by all that to this day.

That was what we got out of World War II when we collaborated with the Allies and took part in the war. Turkey, our neighbor, did not join them. She signed a treaty with the Germans and even courted them until the final days of the war. She not only did not make a thousandth of the sacrifices or suffer a fraction of what we did but she received a billion five hundred million dollars worth of aid from our Allies so far.

The Germans who fought the Allies for six years, look what aid they are getting, see how they have stabilized their position, and are gradually becoming the most powerful nation in Europe.

But we who were a friend and an ally, look what our fate is today. And all this because we were not neutral. If we had remained neutral during World War II as we had during World War I we would have been a thousand times better off. Therefore, we must learn from the past and pursue a policy of neutrality with all our strength because it is the only policy that can secure our interests.

#### 1. Righteousness and Justice

Those were the more important arguments of the partisans of neutrality. Now, as we have said, we shall analyze each of these arguments:

1. The first argument was that neither of the two gigantic world blocs, i.e., the Communists or the nations in the West, are really disciples of righteousness and justice. Therefore, we cannot abandon our ancient customs and habits and join the ranks of either. We must remain neutral.

It seems that those who talk that way do not live in this world but rather in a world of dreams and emotions. Of course, righteousness and justice are high ideals for any community or honest human being but the periphery of politics does not recognize their meaning. In the world of politics calculated interests and the size of forces come before all else. There is a well-known saying to the effect that politics knows no father or mother, i.e. politics has no respect for the principles of morality; in place of morality we have government interests, balance of power, and military and economic potential. It cannot be otherwise. If a government, regardless of how powerful it is, bases its diplomacy on emotions and morality it is doomed to annihilation. Suppose during the last war the Allies instructed their pilots not to bomb cities, homes, women and children because it was contrary to the principles of morality what would the position of the Allies be today? Would their countries not have been overrun

and their wealth and possessions wiped out? Would Hitler not have become the master of the world and destroyed and annihilated the Allies?

Or if the American Government had thought it immoral to drop the atom bomb on Hiroshima what would have been the outcome of the war? If Japan had the opportunity to discover the secret of the atom bomb would it not have dropped it on American cities? In which case, would the war not have been worse and losses on both sides been many times greater?!

Therefore, in war and diplomacy principles of morality, rights, justice, etc. cannot be observed. In any case, let us suppose these principles were involved. No one in the world today would pay any attention to them. Diplomacy is based on the calculated economic and military strength of the parties concerned.

Therefore, if a nation bases its diplomacy on morality it will never get anywhere. We must say that such a nation lives in a world of dreams. If any nation in this chaotic world proceeds with closed sleepy eyes, and builds its policy on dreams it will certainly fall into a pit of destruction.

If we want to live and safeguard our independence and freedom and have firm hopes for the future we must come out of this world of dreams, lay aside emotions, open our eyes, understand the world of today, and realistically choose a course suitable to our interests. Especially for a nation such as ours which is not materially strong, realistic diplomacy is very important and necessary. Those who are strong and powerful can correct a small diplomatic mistake because of their military and political power but any mistake by us might be irreparable.

If we put aside emotions and dreams and see the world as it is we shall find that there are two gigantic powers in whose hands are concentrated almost all military, economic, and political strength.

Countries still outside the blocs are in some way associated, willingly or unwillingly, with one or the other but their strength is so weak and insignificant compared with that of the blocs.

Both blocs are thoroughly united, armed, powerful, and organized, whereas the so-called neutral countries are distinct and dispersed. Therefore, it is obvious that in the present world neutral countries cannot choose the policy and course they prefer but must face the situation, take into account the bloody struggle between the two powerful world blocs, and adapt their policy and course accordingly. If we say the great powers should be repulsed because they do not accede to our desires, tastes, and customs, we shall neither change reality nor shall they be repulsed. They will not give up their struggle and endeavors and we shall not keep ourselves out of the ebb and flow of world policy.

World events and changes will draw us into their terrible

current whether we like it or not. The reasoning of these adherents of neutrality is like that of a person caught in a row boat on a stormy sea who says to the huge waves: "Waves, I do not like your looks and your movement is not good for my health, so please leave me alone and do not come near me." Does talk like that keep the frightful waves from capsizing his tiny boat in one sweep???

Persons who claim that we should remain neutral because the big powers do not stand for righteousness and justice and do not respect our ancient customs talk exactly like the man in the boat.

According to this argument we should cease all commerce, negotiations, and communications and get back into our shell because the Iranian people are Shiite Moslems, the Europeans and Americans are Christians, the Hindus and Chinese are Buddhists, and the remaining nations are Sunnite Moslems; they are all of a different religion and have nothing in common with our customs and habits.

That is why we should cut off relations. Where would such a course lead us and can it really be done?!

Therefore, willingly or unwillingly, we must dispense with our desires, wishes, and customs, look at the world situation, consider the two powerful blocs, then choose a course that is advantageous to us.

On the other hand, as absolute righteousness and justice do not exist in the world, outright unrighteousness and injustice do not neither exist.

As much as the big powers ignore righteousness and justice, they are obliged to give them some consideration.

But concern for righteousness and justice is not the same with all the large powers, particularly with the two world blocs. If we really hope to preserve righteousness and justice we must try to determine which of the two blocs has greater regard for them and is prepared to apply them to some extent.

What is certain is that the communist countries are absolutely indifferent to righteousness and justice. Whenever these moral truths are in conflict with their slightest interests they trample them under foot; even their propaganda and ideological textbooks insolently admit this. Pedagogy and the indoctrination of children are founded on "Egotism" and indifference to customs and morality.

In this respect the communist countries can only be compared with Germany under Hitler. They are even more advanced than Hitler and the Nazis; they are known throughout the world as the outstanding enemies of righteousness, justice, and morality. Consequently, we have nothing in common with them.

The western nations have at least some regard for international

law and justice. We do not propose to defend these countries but in the present world we cannot remain fakirs and isolationists. We have to clarify our position, lay aside puritanism, and consider the two blocs objectively. The one closer to us should be recognized and selected.

## 2. Our Interests

The second argument contends that we must remain neutral since each bloc is only looking out for its own interests and not ours.

Part of this argument is true and part of it is false but both elements have been linked together and distorted. We must separate and recognize each of the elements.

That the big powers look out for their own interests is absolutely true and that we must look out for our interests is also true. But it cannot be concluded from Mary and Helene that we must remain neutral. This is completely false and distorted. Let us see why.

That the big powers look out for their own interests is only natural. Do you expect the large nations to secure only the interests of others and not their own? For instance, should the French sacrifice their interests for the interests of the slant-eyed Indo-Chinese and Indonesians or the large-nosed inhabitants of Zanzibar?! Does this make sense to human nature?!

The first and most basic instinct in a living being is self-preservation. Every creature, be it gregarious or nongregarious, looks out for itself first and as long as life and interests are at stake it cannot devote attention to others. Nations are like that too and they are duty-bound to safeguard their interests first. This is completely in conformity with human instinct. Not only a large nation but even the smallest thinks of nothing but protecting its interests and it is not prepared to sacrifice itself for others. Even the ant wants the whole world for itself and says "Come what may after I die." In the world of diplomacy no one is in love with any one else. Love, lover, heroism, and self-sacrifice are non-existent; only we are prepared to overlook our interests for another nation regardless of how close it is to us.

And so it is that we cannot expect others to sacrifice themselves for us.

Therefore, it is quite natural that the big powers should think about their interests.

On the other hand, it is necessary and natural that we too open our eyes and ears and concentrate all our strength and thoughts on securing and safeguarding our interests. In this world no one can live haphazardly, without a plan. If we care to sit and sleep and expect others to come and safeguard our rights and interests we are sadly mistaken.

Although nations are closely associated with each other today,

each nation is entirely responsible for its own existence. It is obvious that we too have to recognize our interests and advantages and protect them.

But the main question is whether or not we would be able to safeguard our interests with a policy of neutrality.

In order to safeguard our interests we must have contact and relations with the world, particularly with the big powers. Since we do not live in a world of dreams but in this world, our interests are related to the interests of others, especially to those of the big powers. Thus, when we try to safeguard our interests we run into their interests and plans and since they have the power and strength and are supreme in the world they will never accept our views blindly and let us do what we want. They will stop us. Since we maintain the same attitude towards both blocs they become suspicious of us and consequently we face resistance and opposition from both sides.

Obstacles will be set up along the way and we shall never reach our goal, i.e. the securing of our interests as we would like to secure them. Therefore, it becomes clear that by following a policy of neutrality we will not only be unable to secure our interests but harm will come to us daily.

Yes, it is true that if there was absolute freedom in the world, nations would not have to deal with each other and it would be possible for us to secure our interests by following a policy of neutrality. But, unfortunately, no nation enjoys absolute freedom today. All nations are mutually bound and tied to each other; the interests of one are related to the interests of others and the acts of one directly or indirectly affect the life of the rest. In a world of this type, a country such as ours will certainly not be able to secure its interests by following a policy of neutrality.

It would do no harm to relate an example we all lived through. After Iran nationalized the oil industry our interests demanded selling to countries that would buy, such as Italy, Japan, etc., in order to maintain the industry and promote reconstruction and national prosperity.

These were positive, undeniable, legitimate interests of ours but they encountered serious opposition from the large oil trusts because the countries we were selling to were part of their monopoly and they were not going to yield markets to us at any price.

They therefore created thousands of difficulties and obstructed our sales so much that even when Iran reduced the price of oil 50%, purchasers who were willing to transport the oil could not do so.

Not only the former oil company but all the oil trusts opposed our plans. And the opposition did not end there. Another head of a donkey, the Soviet Government, was prepared for competition. The Russians are today one of the largest sellers of oil and are eagerly looking for new markets and as soon as the Iranian Government reduced the price of oil they reduced their price 30% in order to grab our customers.

You see now how a conflict of interests prevents a smaller nation like ours from securing its interests through neutrality. But what cannot be reached through neutrality can be attained with the help of a wise policy. For instance, you see these same trusts that yesterday fought us are today prepared to guarantee the sale of Iranian oil through a Consortium not only by conceding markets but also by opening special ones for us. The reason for the difference today is that they are certain the sale of Iranian oil will not clash with their interests. On the other hand, they know that our industries and our Government need assistance to withstand pressure from the Russians and they must protect and strengthen us for their own sake also. Therefore, a thing which was impossible yesterday becomes readily possible today. What is the main difference between our policy yesterday and our policy today? The difference is that yesterday we wanted to secure our interests through neutrality and today we are trying to secure them with a wise policy. So you see, neutrality brought us defeat but a wise policy, a policy of collaboration within the interests of the Iranian nation, can bring us victory and success.

One very important and noteworthy point is this: every nation thinks of safeguarding its interests and the big powers do not hesitate to take action to protect theirs. In this world of chaos we too should think about securing our interests and holding on to our hats. But this does not mean that our interests cannot tie in with the interests of other countries and even with those of the big powers. There can be no doubt that many of our interests and aims can tie in with the interests of the big powers because not only do we need them but they also need us.

Therefore, the possibility of adapting interests and aims does exist. It all depends on the form and manner in which we want to carry out ours. We can execute them in a manner unacceptable to other governments or we can dress them up in a way that is acceptable to them. In the first instance, since our aims would be in serious conflict with theirs, they would oppose ours and wipe them out.

In the second instance our interests would be acceptable and in line with theirs and they would not only not oppose them but even back them up.

Therefore, the argument of neutralists that they think about their interests, we must think about ours, and the only way to do this is by a policy of neutrality, is false and distorted.

If it were not possible to adapt our interests, this argument would be correct, but we see and know that our interests can be adapted to those of other countries and the great powers and that the adaptation depends on the manner in which it is accomplished. In which case, there is no reason why we should choose neutrality. Such a policy would, in fact, not only not secure our interests but would bring us detriment and defeat.

Now that we have learned that neutrality can in no way secure

our real interests and that the only way to defend and safeguard our interests is to adopt a wise policy, ie. try to adapt our interests to those of the world powers, this problem arises: to which of the two powerful blocs should we adapt our interests? In other words, when we give up neutrality and start looking around, which side should we follow, which side should we choose?

It is certain that the interests and the ways of the two powerful blocs are diametrically opposed to each other and that it is impossible for us to adapt ourselves to both blocs and follow opposite paths.

The answer to the above problem is quite clear. We must choose the side and join the bloc whose interests and aims are more in conformity with ours. In this way we shall make fewer concessions and derive more benefit.

Now let us observe and study the two blocs. The one bloc consists of Russia and the communist countries and the other comprises the nations in the West.

No one can deny that our interests and aims are closer and more in conformity with those of the western nations. While we have many things in common with them, we can hardly find any common interest between Iran and the Communist Bloc.

Without discussing this subject at length we shall mention the vital factors which remove us from the Communists and bring us closer to the Western Bloc:

(a) Our most fundamental interest and our basic policy lie in safeguarding our independence and territorial integrity against trespassing and aggression. This is one point on which we cannot yield. We want to protect our independence and sovereignty against outside interference.

In this respect our interest coincides with that of the western nations and clashes with that of the Soviet Bloc. Regardless of what the western nations are and what they have done and are doing to us they have one important virtue and that is the desire to maintain world conditions as they are without any changes in distribution or frontiers. But there can be no doubt that the ultimate and basic aim of the Russians and the Communists is world domination from one end to the other i.e. extreme expansionism.

Compare the British or French empire with that of Russia. England and France carried out their expansion in the past and today they find no opportunity for further expansion. The best they can do is try to hold on to all or part of their colonies. But Russia, like Nazi Germany, started its expansion in recent years and has long-range plans for it.

Soviet propaganda, regardless of what it is today, has not given up the idea of expansion for a single moment. Hitler shouted "peace" up until the outbreak of the war but he had never given up the idea

of aggression. All communist text books show that the communist aim is to dominate the world and create a Union of Soviet Republics.

Therefore, behind the mask of propaganda for peace and friendly coexistence is the frightful aspect of aggression and expansion.

The danger of Soviet expansion exists for all countries, but for our country which has thousands of kilometers of common frontier the danger is even greater. The situation compels us to join the western nations. Our interests are more in line with theirs and they want our country to remain as it is with its independence and sovereignty safeguarded and strengthened. But the Soviet Union wants to dismember us bit-by-bit and make us one of its republics.

(b) There is a difference between Soviet and Western expansion. Soviet expansion is much more dangerous. Western expansion is embodied in old colonial methods but Soviet expansion is hidden behind an ideology of sweet, phoney promises of Socialism.

We are all familiar with the old colonial methods and it is highly improbable that they would be successful today. But the deceitful methods of Russian expansionism are not yet known to the masses and are, therefore, more dangerous. This is another reason why we can have more assurance from the West than we can from the Russians.

(c) Communist ideology, which is the foundation of the Soviet Bloc, in no way conforms with our religion, customs, habits and way of living, whereas the western nations are governed democratically and constitutionally just like we are.

(d) The nations behind the Iron Curtain enjoy no freedom or autonomy whatsoever. They must obey Soviet orders without question. There is comparatively greater freedom in the West; each nation is completely free and it is only in international politics that they are united.

(e) From an economic point of view, our country has much to do with the western nations but we have no significant relationship with the Russians. Wherefore, if we separate ourselves from the West we shall suffer considerable harm. The only purchasers of Iranian oil are in the West. Because of distance and lack of maritime facilities the Soviet Bloc cannot buy our oil; moreover, it has no need for it. The same holds true of our export rugs, rice, tragacanth gum, etc. Separation from the western world would mean the end of Iranian exports and the beginning of a depression.

(f) Many historical antecedents bind us to the West. Nations such as France, America, and Germany have great respect and esteem for our culture, civilization, and history, and without a doubt we could live with more respect in the western world than we could anywhere else.

These, briefly, are the important factors which bring us closer to the West and remove us from the Soviet bloc. Our place, therefore,



is in the Western Bloc and not behind the Iron Curtain.

### 3. Opposition From the Other Side

The third argument is that if we join one of the blocs we shall call down upon ourselves the enmity of the other and our country will be converted into a battlefield. But our interests demand that our country should not become a battlefield, so we must remain neutral.

The mistake of these neutralists is that they believe a country will have nothing to worry about if it remains neutral. This is not so. On the contrary, a country that is determined to follow neutrality is destined for worry and torture.

When the big powers have basic economic and political interests in a country, they do not let her off easily.

On the one hand, the aggressor blocs think the country is trying to fool them by donning a mask of neutrality to cover her collaboration with the other side. They think she has been instructed to declare herself neutral so the opposition could not undertake certain measures there. Neutrality has no meaning in the dictionary of the big powers. They do not believe a country can really remain neutral. As soon as a country declares its neutrality, immediately doubt and suspicion fall upon her. All kinds of pressure is exerted and she suffers from both sides.

If a nation thinks she can get a better price for joining a bloc by playing hard to get, she is subjected to propaganda, agitation, ultimatums, etc., to make her join. When these measures fail, they come to the conclusion that she joined the other side, and then a flood of accusations and economic and political pressure are applied against her.

Finally, when both sides are disappointed by the country because she will join neither side, they know where they stand and start drawing up plans to partition her between themselves. That is what happens to neutrality!

Thus, the contention that neutral countries will not be invaded and become a battlefield is absolutely senseless. In a world where diplomacy and economy have become universal the big powers never pay attention to the neutrality of smaller countries. The history of international wars shows that when the neutrality of a smaller nation is not in the best interests of the military and political plans of the big powers the neutral nation becomes a holocaust.

Until the final showdown comes, neutral countries will be the scene of an intense war of nerves. Political and propaganda intrigues start in these countries and they are not given a moment's peace. But the non-neutral nations know where they stand and are less affected by the cold war.

And when a war starts neutral nations are, as a rule, attacked and invaded quicker than the countries belonging to the belligerent

blocs. The reason is quite obvious. The two blocs think that if I do not occupy that country the enemy will do so and convert it into a fortress against me. Meanwhile, each bloc calculates that, since the country is neutral, it cannot have much of a defensive military force and it should be easy to occupy, whereas the bloc countries are prepared and well armed. It is the neutral country that is always invaded first.

The best historical example of this is Belgium's position during the World War I. Germany declared war on France and Belgium declared itself neutral. Instead of attacking France, Germany first invaded Belgium and occupied the country within a few days. Why? Because Germany calculated she could better attack France from the rear, i.e. through the Belgian border. Another sparkling example of neutrality violation occurred in our own country during the last war by the cowardly attack in the month of Shahrivar 1320 /September 1941/. We can say for certain that in the next war no country will be permitted to remain neutral; the whole world will be at war.

Therefore, the contention that neutral countries will be free from invasion and will not become battlefields is absurd and meaningless. They will become battlefields sooner than the rest, but there will be one difference: the nations that have chosen sides will share the spoils of war if they are in the ranks of the victorious, but the neutral countries, who will have suffered the most, will be given no consideration at all. No matter which side wins, they still suffer.

This again is one of the benefits of neutrality!

#### 4. Loss of Freedom

The fourth argument maintains that if we joined one of the blocs we would become limited and restricted and our freedom would be taken away. Therefore, in order to enjoy absolute freedom we must remain neutral and not join either bloc.

This argument is also wishful thinking and persons who make such statements are out of this world. Absolute freedom today is nothing but a dream, and this holds true for both individuals and nations.

All countries are to some degree, associated with each other and every country, including the most powerful, must have some regard for its allies, even its enemies. No country can carry out its plans and attain its goals without due consideration for the rest.

Today there is no more powerful country in the world than America. She is twice as strong as the Soviet Union economically and none of her allies can compare with her militarily; she is many times stronger than they are.

The American Government is supporting and paying the greater portion of the allied war budget and, in spite of this, she is often forced to limit her views and objectives and forego certain of her plans. Why? Because her allies are not prepared to accept them.

America, for instance, is doing all she can to integrate West Germany into the European Army. She attaches very much importance to this and has even prepared the governments of France, England, etc., for it, but the French Parliament will not ratify the agreement. The matter has reached a point where America has threatened to let the Germans rearm themselves if agreement is not reached!

When a powerful nation like America is compelled to restrain herself and forego part of her plans, can a small nation like Iran lay claim to absolute freedom in the world of today? As we have said, absolute freedom is nothing but a dream. But in the community of nations relative freedom is enjoyed and it is to this fundamental matter that attention must be directed.

What is important is that we safeguard our independence, national sovereignty, and basic interests. In other matters we can make certain concessions in order to derive greater benefits; in other words, without these concessions cooperation is impossible.

But we must bear in mind that there is a difference of night and day between cooperation and obedience, servility, and taking orders. We do not approve of neutrality. In our opinion, we must cooperate with the western nations and obtain a real place on their side, but this cooperation must be the collaboration of free and equal nations.

Our fundamental interests and our sovereignty must be safeguarded and assured during this collaboration. Running blindly after others and sacrificing fundamental interests cannot be termed collaboration and unity; that would be obedience and servility which, in our opinion, are to be detested and condemned.

##### 5. Neutrality and the Smaller Nations

The fifth argument is that history has shown neutrality to be beneficial to smaller nations, and Switzerland is given as an example.

These gentlemen are also mistaken. Not only does history fail to prove their argument but it provides, on the contrary, considerable evidence to show that neutrality has been anything but advantageous to the smaller nations.

A classic example, which we have already cited, was the fate of Belgium during World War I. Despite repeated French and British objections, Belgium declared its neutrality and was overrun by the Germans in a short, unprecedented period of time.

Another example is Norway's position during World War II. Norway felt certain her neutrality would be respected just as it had been in World War I but six months after the war started, this genuinely neutral, peace-loving nation was savagely invaded by Nazi Germany and within a week she lost her freedom, independence, and everything she owned.

If the Norwegian Government had not relied on neutrality but had,

with the help of the Allies, fortified her coastline, the invasion of Norway would have been very difficult and we dare say she would never have been invaded. But neutrality ruined Norway and brought six years of severe torture to her noble people.

Denmark, Yugoslavia, and Greece witnessed the same fate during the last war. They too were neutral. Despite the fact that their neutrality was zealously guarded, when German and Italian interests called for an invasion, they were mercilessly attacked and they fell.

We could mention other instances but we see no need for it.

When you see that Swiss neutrality remained intact during the last war, it had nothing to do with neutrality itself but with the geographic location of that country. Swiss neutrality was respected because the belligerent nations saw no need to violate it. If they had, Swiss neutrality would have come to an end within a day or two. The location of Switzerland is unique and it cannot be compared with that of other small countries, much less with that of our country. Switzerland is not in as strategic a position as our country, which is at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, and she does not have the enormous oil resources we do. Therefore, we, nor any other country, can be compared with Switzerland at all.

Nevertheless, let us see what the situation in Switzerland is today. The days when Switzerland could remain neutral have passed. Switzerland has placed herself firmly on the side of the western nations and is playing an important role in that bloc because the next war will be a war into which every nation will be drawn and no nation will be able to remain neutral. Switzerland feels she is located in the path of the war between the East and West and for this reason she has made her position clear.

Another example. India is considered today to be very neutral and neutralists cite her as an example. But what do you think India's position really is? This neutral India receives 190 million dollars in aid every year from America and, on the other hand, she is one of the important Commonwealth nations, i.e. she is in the English bloc at any rate. The relationships of this neutral India certainly shed light on her position.

Turkey is another country that managed to remain neutral during the last war but today she is the strongest pillar the Western Bloc has in Asia.

All this shows that neutrality has no meaning in the world today and will make less sense in the war to come. Therefore, our welfare demands that we clarify our position as soon as possible.

#### 6. Iranian Neutrality in the Past

The sixth and final argument of neutralists consists of examples in Iranian history to prove that our country benefited considerably from neutrality and suffered great harm when she did not remain neutral.

This again is absolutely false. The history of Iran proves the opposite to be true. In World War I Iranian neutrality resulted in Russian and British occupation and the destruction and loss caused by the invasion from the North and South were felt for many years after the war. The British remained as a police force in Fars and the Russians under the pretext of aiding the Gilan Forest Revolution stayed on in Mazanderan.

If the unforeseen events of the Russian Revolution and subsequent communist worries at home had not taken place, our disappearance would have been certain because the Russians and English in their 1915 agreement, which supplemented that of 1907, had decided to divide Iran between themselves as soon as the war ended. Fortunately, Iran got a big break when the Russian Revolution occurred. After the downfall of the Czarist Regime England feared Bolshevik Russia would try to exert too much pressure on Iran so she let the agreement die. If these events had not occurred, our doom would have been sealed.

If we had joined the Allies we would have been in a good position to profit considerably during the Russian Revolution and after the war.

Yet during World War II we made the same mistake. If we had joined the Allies at the very beginning, the events of the month of Shahrivar September certainly would not have occurred and if the Allies cared to pass through Iran this could have taken place under much better circumstances. The misery which befell us after we joined the Allies was brought about not because we layed neutrality aside but because the Shahrivar events automatically did away with it. The cause of this situation was twofold: erroneous policy followed prior to the month of Shahrivar, which brought about the Allied occupation of Iran, and a weak, corrupt, and inefficient statesmanship that did not take advantage of events as it might have.

Thus, you see that our country's record of neutrality not only did not benefit us but it brought us considerable harm. All evidence contradicts the neutralists and shows that our country today, more than ever before, must lay aside neutrality and select a wise policy based on safeguarding our independence and sovereignty and securing our basic interests, from which we can never deviate. Let us place ourselves in the ranks of the western nations and openly and clearly announce our position to the world.

Of course, much propaganda is being waged today for neutrality and certain elements are trying to prepare the terrain for it. Most of this propaganda comes directly or indirectly from the Tudeh Party and is based on Soviet policy. Soviet tactics today consist in keeping those countries neutral that have not yet chosen sides. Neutrality, in the Soviet mind, is a prelude to driving nations behind the Iron Curtain. Actually however, the Soviets and Communists are more opposed to neutrality than anyone else. This same Tudeh Party which today is the champion of neutrality was in the past very much opposed to it. Listen and see

for yourself what the Tudeh Party said in Razm, No 7, 15 Dey 1327 /December 1948/:

"What does neutrality mean in a society that is founded on the parasitism and plundering of a deceitful few? What does a neutral person say? Is a neutral person really neutral? Absolutely not. By his silence he makes it easier for thieves and becomes an accessory to their crimes. A neutral person aids and abets plundering, paves the way for tyranny, and reduces the power of resistance and justice. Whether a neutralist expects to share in the stolen goods or is afraid to get hurt in the struggle makes no difference; wittingly or unwittingly, he is making a contribution to tyranny. The black role of political neutralists has always meant victory for the tyrant and the obliteration of justice since they fire their rounds of hypocrisy from concealed positions into the trench of justice."

"One of the great leaders of the Revolution says that neutrality means political complacency. This is true. Only those who are content with their political and social environment have no desire or will for reform. To them the present situation is the perfect order. They do not look around for change. Those who are politically and socially satisfied can remain neutral. Besides, they are cowards who are afraid of the wicked sneers of Capitalism."

"They want to remain alive even if life must go on in mud, dirt, misery, and poverty. What is important for them is to remain alive and breathe. Out of fear, these people are prepared to make life worse than death but they can have it for themselves ----- The mistake neutralists make is that they think they are out of the reach of danger. The wicked giant of tyranny does not distinguish between neutral and non-neutral; when he takes over, he will crush both in his iron claws. The only difference is that the non-neutral fights with honor and falls but the neutral yields through weakness and makes it difficult for justice to triumph."

"Not only should neutrality be done away with and a social goal established, but we should be prepared to support that goal... In social struggles, particularly in the gigantic struggle which is taking place throughout the world, we cannot act feebly and carelessly. The harm and ugliness of neutrality are much clearer today. There can be no doubt which side neutralists serve since there are only two recognizable fronts. Certain unstable opportunist elements shout: "No, this is not so," there is a third front which has neither the extremes nor the exaggerations of the other two fronts. This is a meaningless argument and a poisonous lie that proceeds from the mouths of complacent politicians. What medium is there between the exploited and the exploiters? Where is that medium they talk about? Where is the medium between plundering and the necessity to eradicate plundering? These middle-of-the-road partisans have a philosophic temperament and, unfortunately, are nothing but a new tool in the hands of colonialism and exploitation. The Bevins and the Blums are the founders of the third power formula, but

who does not know the camp the Bevins are in ....."

"These partisans of a third power are nothing but toys in the hands of international imperialism. Actually one cannot differentiate between Marshall's hatred and Bevin's anger towards labor and colonial movements."

"Not only is the neutrality of individuals in social matters improper but the neutrality of nations toward world events is equally improper. In the world today there are only two ranks -- the enslavers of nations and the enslaved....."

"It is impossible to remain in isolation today. Speed has changed the world into a small home; no part is any longer detached or unrelated. The movement of the masses is everywhere the same and capitalists throughout the world are united too. No nation can surround itself with a China wall and isolate itself from the conflicts and troubles of the world."

"In order to promote national growth and the cultural development of mankind, a world goal is indispensable."

That was a sample of earlier statements by the eyeless, faceless, shameless Tudeh Party! And now it raises its voice in favor of neutrality! The honest people of our country must open their eyes and ears and not be taken in by the deceitful hypocrites. We must do away with emotion, come out of the world of dreams, study the turbulent world carefully, and choose a wise policy that blends in with our interests and national sovereignty.

We pray God not to permit another war but if a war does come and we are neutral or not neutral they will still invade our country like they did during World War I and World War II and slaughter our youth and our people and devastate our land. Therefore, while we are beseeching Almighty God not to permit another war, it is best that we state our position and get as much as we can out of the opportunities the world offers. In the meantime, let us prepare ourselves and if a war comes and they are not nice to us at least we shall not go to the slaughterhouse with our hands tied.

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